



Try Me Days: Mushrooms

There are 2000 edible mushroom species but less than 100 sold in stores. Mushrooms, or fungi, are considered a superfood by many due to their nutritious and sometimes medicinal properties.

Mushrooms are a *low* glycemic food and also *low* in:

- calories
- carbohydrates
- fat

Mushrooms are *high* in vitamins and minerals like:

- copper
- B vitamins
- potassium
- magnesium
- phosphorous
- folate
- zinc
- iron
- fiber
- Antioxidants

Potassium is an essential mineral not produced in the body but must be obtained from dietary sources. Fruits and vegetables have the highest concentration of potassium per serving. Broccoli, peas, tomatoes, potatoes, winter squash, apricots, citrus fruits, kiwi, bananas and melons are excellent sources of potassium. *Mushrooms are an additional excellent source of potassium.*

Potassium is *important* and *required* for:

- maintaining fluid and electrolyte balance
- metabolism
- normal heart, muscle and nerve function

Modern diets, which are high in [sodium](#) and low in potassium, are recognized as largely contributing to the high prevalence of high blood pressure. **Reducing processed food intake** and increasing foods rich in potassium can help you prevent or lower high blood pressure.

Buying mushrooms:

- Fresh mushrooms are available all year long
- Peak season in the US is from April to June
- Wild mushrooms are available seasonally, usually in summer and fall.
- Look for fresh mushrooms that are clean and free of blemishes, such as soft, moist spots and discoloration.
- Fresh mushrooms can be stored in the refrigerator in an open container for about five days.
- Do not wash them until just before use.

Some experts suggest that you're better off **cooking mushrooms** because cooking helps release their vitamins and minerals. They are a hearty ingredient that can add texture, flavor and substance to meals and can be used in sauces, stews, and soups, or simply chop, sauté, and add to grain, potato or egg dishes. They can be used as a meat alternative in various dishes.

Food allergies to mushrooms are rare. Some wild mushrooms can be poisonous, so you never want to eat mushrooms that you find growing outside.